

VA Stars & Stripes Healthcare Network

2005 Annual Report

Dear Friends of the VA Stars & Stripes Healthcare Network:

On behalf of the employees of the VA Stars & Stripes Healthcare Network (VISN 4), I am pleased to provide you with a copy of our FY 2005 Annual Report.

During FY 2005, VA Stars & Stripes Healthcare Network facilities treated over 300,000 patients. Once again, this topped the previous year's numbers. What was particularly satisfying was this increase occurred even as our overall patient satisfaction scores continued to remain higher than VA's national average. The vast majority of VISN 4's patients rated our facilities' overall quality of inpatient and outpatient care as very good or excellent, which is at a rate that consistently exceeds the national averages.

I am very proud that we expanded our communications about VISN 4's programs and services to our patients and stakeholders. Through our patient newsletter, *Veterans First*, the VISN 4 Web site, meetings, and various printed materials, we disseminated information about a wide range of topics, such as our research and volunteer transportation programs and the benefits available to homeless veterans or returning service members.

In FY 2005, we made great strides in our other areas of emphasis as well. For example, working closely with our academic affiliates, VISN 4's research and education programs continued to grow. In addition, over 150 Network employees volunteered and were deployed to assist veterans and non-veterans affected by the wrath of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma.

I thank our employees, volunteers, and community partners for your ongoing commitment to helping us fulfill all of VISN 4's vital missions.



Charleen R. Szabo, FACHE
Network Director



Serving those who served



Workload & Financial Report

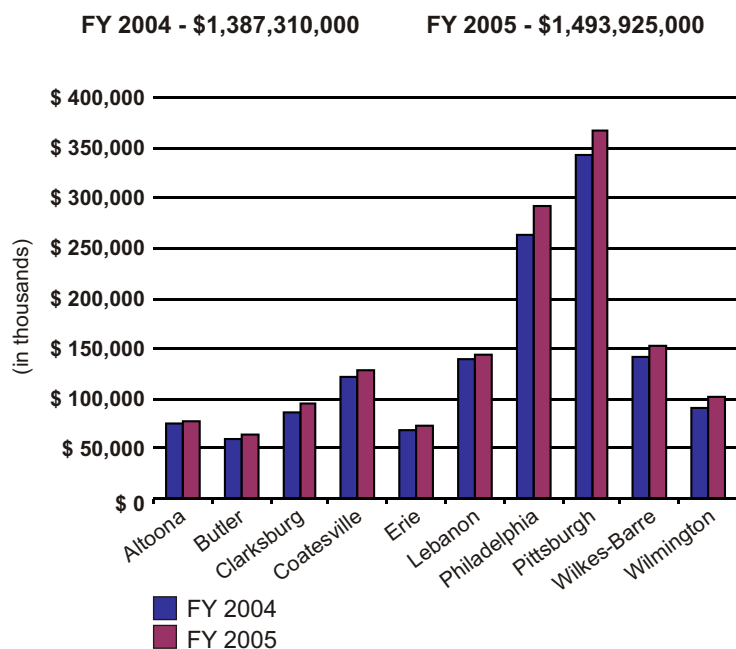
	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
Unique Patients	284,441	295,842	302,140
Costs/Patient ¹	\$4,122	\$4,297	\$4,487
Outpatient Visits	2,325,419	2,516,045	2,593,487
Pharmacy Costs	\$224,189,220	\$251,786,391	\$261,250,260
Pharmacy Costs/Patient	\$788	\$851	\$881
MCCR Collections ²	\$84,239,931	\$95,920,151	\$100,397,654
Prosthetics Funding	\$44,151,000	\$50,404,500	\$51,754,584

1. Excludes costs for capital spending. 2. MCCR: Medical Care Cost Recovery

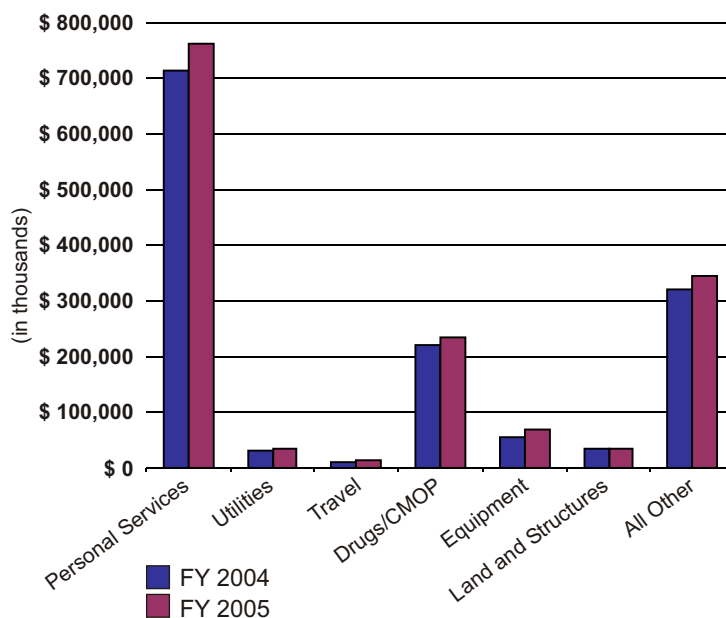
Medical Care Obligations – \$1,504,105,000

(Note: Obligations are funds committed on the date an order is placed to pay for supplies or services to be received.)

Medical Care Obligations by Facility



Medical Care Obligations by Expense Category



Health Care and Customer Service Improvements

Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs): Four new CBOCs were opened this year – in the Pennsylvania counties of Fayette, Northampton, Venango, and Warren – giving us 47 overall.

Care Coordination Program: After an extensive review, our Care Coordination/Home Telehealth (CCHT) program was awarded “full program” status by VA’s Office of Care Coordination. Several components of the program were cited as “best practices” to be shared across VA. At year’s end, there were 281 patients enrolled in our CCHT program, which provides home-based monitoring equipment and clinical support to patients with high-risk, chronic illnesses. We will continue to expand the program, with an FY 2006 target enrollment of 1000.

2005 Patient Satisfaction Survey

	National	VISN 4
Inpatient Overall Quality (Very good, Excellent)	77	79
Outpatient Satisfaction (Very good, Excellent)	77	82
Provider Wait Time (20 minutes or less)	73	80
Appointment when wanted (Established Patient)	85	92
Appointment when wanted (New Patient)	84	92

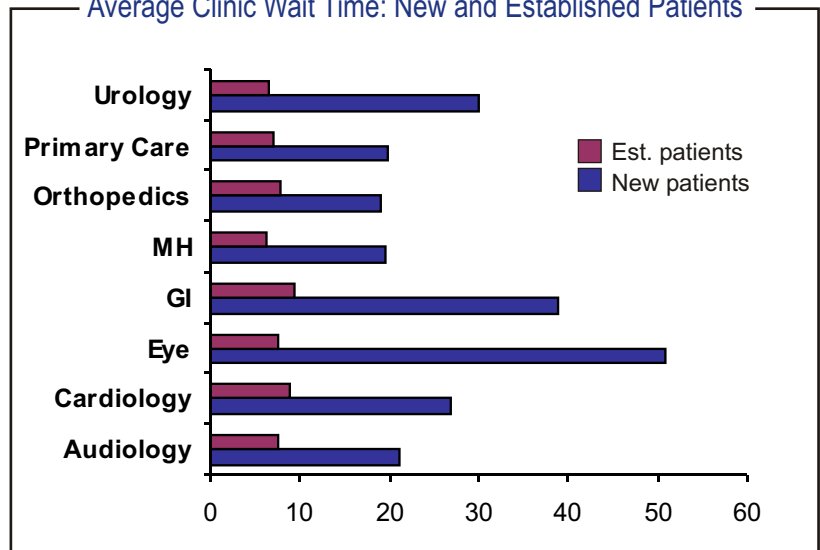
Patient Safety

In FY 2005, all VISN 4 medical centers began collaborating with community hospitals on the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's "100,000 Lives Campaign." This initiative is designed to implement changes that are proven to improve patient care and prevent avoidable deaths. This is the first national effort to promote saving a specified number of lives by a certain date. In another initiative, facility staff, patients, and visitors were educated about the importance of washing their hands via VA's "Improving Hand Hygiene" program. This initiative has been directly linked to the prevention of the spread of infectious agents in our facilities. We also continued to track and monitor our successes in preventing falls through patient and family education provided in the hospital and home settings.

Access

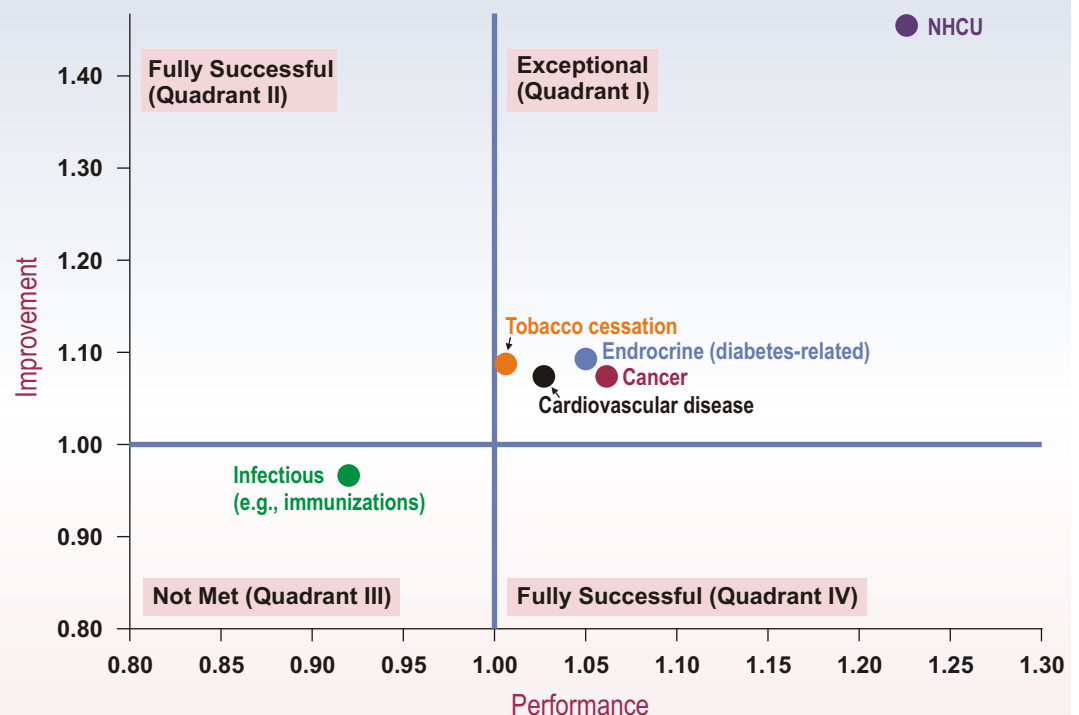
The network's average wait time is under 30 days for all clinics except new patients in eye, GI, and urology.

Average Clinic Wait Time: New and Established Patients



Clinical Interventions

FY 2005 VISN 4 Quadrant Analysis



VISN 4 achieved the "exceptional" performance level in 5 of the clinical interventions tracked during the entire FY (i.e. cancer, cardiovascular, endocrine, nursing home care unit, and tobacco). Measurement of influenza immunization remains a disease prevention priority, and initiatives to improve continue.

Updates

Returning Service Members: VISN 4 facilities treated 2,149 returning service members (vs. 1,413 in FY 2004). Over 100 VISN 4 employees have served in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

Research: In FY 2005, VISN 4's research program expanded to approximately 600 active research projects. This includes projects involving Alzheimer's disease, brain injuries, diabetes, hepatitis C, Parkinson's disease, prosthetic devices for amputees, prostate cancer, post-stroke depression, and sleep apnea.

Mental Health: The network was awarded \$2.7 million to expand this program. Funding will be used to provide additional mental health care at our CBOCs, enhance PTSD and substance use disorder services, and assist homeless veterans, returning service members, and veterans who are seriously mentally ill.

Organizational Information

VA Stars & Stripes Healthcare Network (VISN 4) is part of the Veterans Health Administration and one of 21 Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs) that comprise the largest, fully integrated health care system in the United States.

Our *mission* is to honor veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being. Our *vision* is to be (1) a patient-centered, integrated health care organization for veterans providing excellence in health care, research, and education; (2) an organization where people choose to work; and (3) an active community partner and a backup for national emergencies. Our *core values* are trust, respect, excellence, compassion, and commitment.

VISN 4's service area includes 104 counties in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, Ohio, and New York. The network is comprised of 10 medical centers, 10 long-term care facilities, 3 domiciliaries, 47 community-based outpatient clinics, and 5 major research centers. An estimated 1.4 million veterans live in our defined service area. In FY 2005, approximately 19% of the veterans living within the network received care at our facilities.

VA Stars & Stripes Healthcare Network

Delafield Road, Pittsburgh PA 15240
(412) 784-3939; (412) 784-3940 FAX
www.starsandstripes.med.va.gov

James E. Van Zandt
VA Medical Center
2907 Pleasant Valley Boulevard
Altoona, PA 16602-4377
1-877-626-2500

VA Medical Center
325 New Castle Road
Butler, PA 16001-2480
1-800-362-8262
www.va.gov/butlerva

Louis A. Johnson
VA Medical Center
1 Medical Center Drive
Clarksburg, WV 26301
1-800-733-0512

VA Medical Center
1400 Black Horse Hill Road
Coatesville, PA 19320-2097
1-800-290-6172
www.coatesville.med.va.gov

VA Medical Center
135 East 38th Street
Erie, PA 16504
1-800-274-8387

VA Medical Center
1700 South Lincoln Avenue
Lebanon, PA 17042
1-800-409-8771

VA Medical Center
University & Woodland Avenues
Philadelphia, PA 19104
1-800-949-1001

VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System
University Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15240
1-866-4VAPITT or
1-866-482-7488
www.va.gov/pittsburgh

VA Medical Center
1111 East End Boulevard
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711-0026
1-877-928-2621
www.va.gov/vamcwb

VA Medical Center
1601 Kirkwood Highway
Wilmington, DE 19805
1-800-461-8262

VA Stars & Stripes Healthcare Network and its Web site are part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and are not affiliated with the newspaper The Stars and Stripes. The Stars and Stripes is the registered trademark of the National Tribune Corporation and is used with their permission.